

Netherlee Parent Council Constitution

1. Name

1.1 The name of the association is Netherlee Primary School and Nursery Parent Council, hereinafter called “the Parent Council”.

2. Functions

2.1 The Parent Council is established in accordance with the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006, hereinafter called “the Act”, in order to represent the parents of children attending Netherlee Primary School and Nursery Class (such parents collectively being known as “the Parent Forum”)

2.2 The functions of the Parent Council are as described in the Act and are to:

- a. Support the school management to improve the quality of education which the school provides, and develop to their fullest potential the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the pupils attending the school;
- b. Develop and engage in activities which support the education and welfare of pupils;
- c. Engage and support fundraising initiatives / activities which will enhance educational facilities at the school for the benefit of pupils;
- d. Promote contacts among the school, the Parent Forum, prospective parents and the community;
- e. Identify and represent the views of the Parent Forum;
- f. Promote a sense of partnership between the Parent Forum and teachers;
- g. Comply with any reasonable request made to it by the headteacher of the school or by the education authority for information relating to the exercise of its functions;
- h. Support the establishment, continuation and representation of parent special interest groups. A special interest group is a group of parents which has an established role in the school and meets regularly e.g. nursery parent groups, parent volunteers, adult learning groups, parent support groups, etc.
- i. Participate in the process for the selection and appointment of the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher(s)
- j. Receive the Headteacher’s report(s) to the Parent Council;
- k. Report on the Parent Council activities to the Parent Forum at least annually.

2.3 Situations or events relating to individual pupils, teachers or parents are not matters for Parent Council involvement.

3. Membership

3.1 Membership of the Parent Council will be open to:

- a. Self-nominating members of the Parent Forum, and
- b. Representatives of special interest parent groups within the school, who will be nominated by their special interest group, and

- c. Members co-opted by the current members of the Parent Council.

3.2 The maximum number of self-nominated members of the Parent Council is 24.

3.3 Membership will terminate when a parent's youngest child leaves the school, when a member gives notice of resigning their position, or by termination in terms of paragraph 3.9.2 or 3.9.3

3.4 Members of the Parent Forum may self nominate for membership of the Parent Council in respect of any vacancies that arise during the year. Membership will be restricted to one parent per household. In the event of the number of self nominations exceeding the number of vacancies paragraph 3.6.1 would be applied. Membership will be recognised at the Parent Council meeting following receipt of the self nomination.

3.5 Every member must confirm their intention to continue as a member when contacted for this purpose by an officer of the Parent Council in advance of each Annual General Meeting. Failure to do so by a pre-set date advertised by the Chair will be considered a resignation.

3.6 In the notice of the Annual General Meeting and taking into account the number of resignations, the Chair will inform the Parent Forum of the number of member vacancies available for the following year, and will invite any member of the Parent Forum to nominate themselves for one of the vacancies.

3.6.1 If more candidates self-nominate than there are vacancies available, the following process will be followed, in the order stated, until a match is achieved between the number of candidates and the number of vacancies:

1. Membership will be restricted to one parent per household.
2. Consideration will be given to the spread of members across all school and nursery years, with priority given to prospective members who have children in the years for which there are fewest existing Parent Council representatives. Candidates with children in years with the highest representation will be asked if they wish to withdraw their self-nomination.
3. If the number of those wanting to join the Parent Council still exceeds the number of vacancies, a lottery of candidates wishing to join will be carried out. The Chair, or in their absence the Vice-Chair, the Secretary or the Treasurer, in that order, will determine the method to be used for this lottery, which must be fair and transparent.

3.7 The maximum number of members who may be co-opted is 4, in addition to 2 teachers of the school.

3.7.1 Co-opted members may represent denominational groups. However, the Parent Council will have due regard to the cultural and religious diversity of the school population in co-opting such members.

3.8 Membership of the Parent Council should reflect, as far as is practical, the diversity of the school population. The Parent Council should take steps, whenever possible, to enhance the diversity of its membership.

3.9 Members are expected to act solely in the interests of the children, the Parent Forum and the school in all Parent Council discussions and decisions. Any member who feels they may have a conflict of interest in relation to any matters before the Parent Council, should inform the Parent Council of this conflict. 3.9.1 The Parent Council will display zero tolerance of bullying, harassment and domineering behaviour either in action by its members or in actions by external bodies to the Parent Council. Equality and fairness are principals essential to the running of the Parent Council.

3.9.2 If any member acts in a way that could be considered to undermine the objectives of the Parent Council, that member can have their membership of the Parent Council terminated by the following process. If a member, seconded by another member, lodges a motion for the removal of such member at a meeting of the Parent Council and receives a majority of the votes of the members attending the meeting, membership is terminated with immediate effect. Termination of membership shall be confirmed in writing from the Chair to the relevant member.

3.9.3 Failure of a member to give notice of non-attendance at three consecutive Parent Council meetings is regarded (excepting special circumstances known to an Office Bearer) as constructive resignation. Termination of membership shall be confirmed in writing from the Chair to the relevant member.

4. Officers

4.1 The Parent Council will have 5 officers: a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Secretary, Communications Lead and, when necessary (see Section 7 below), a Treasurer.

4.2 Only a person who is a member of the school's Parent Forum may hold one of the offices of the Parent Council.

4.3 Once the membership of the Parent Council for the new year has been decided as per Section 3 above, members wishing to stand for office should self nominate for that position. The officers will be elected by a vote of all members at the Annual General Meeting.

4.4 Officers should hold office until the next Annual General Meeting, unless their child leaves the school, they resign, they are unable to carry out their duties (for example due to ill-health) or they leave for any other reason or are removed from their position

4.4.1 In the event that any officer leaves their post during the school year, an election for a new officer will be held at the next meeting of the Parent Council, which will be considered an Extraordinary General Meeting. In the absence of the Chair the meeting will be conducted by another officer acting in that capacity in descending order of seniority as listed in paragraph 4.1. In the event that no officers are available to conduct this meeting, it will be chaired by a representative of East Renfrewshire Council.

4.5 All officers will serve for a maximum term of two consecutive academic years and will be subject to annual re-election. Members may, after holding office for two consecutive academic years in one of the Parent Council's posts (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Communications Lead, Treasurer), seek election to one of the other Council posts.

4.6 Any of the officer roles may be carried out by more than one member to assist in the smooth running of the Parent Council. This does not affect the voting rights of the members involved.

5. Committees

5.1 The Parent Council may appoint such special or standing committees (hereinafter called standing committees) as it deems necessary and shall determine their terms of reference, powers, duration and composition.

5.2 All proposals produced by such standing committees shall be reported to the Parent Council. The standing committees will not implement any decisions without the approval of the Parent Council.

5.3 The Netherlee Primary Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a permanent standing committee of the Parent Council for the purpose of fundraising initiatives and activities which enhance educational facilities at the school for the benefit of pupils. A PTA standing committee member is required to update the Parent Council at each meeting (either in person or via a written report) on the planned / undertaken activities and any financial matters / funds held. Once PTA activities are agreed with the Headteacher, the committee is permitted to implement and commit to the necessary actions to carry out such activities without creating a debt which the level of funds held at the point of commitment could not repay (clause 5.2 does not apply).

6. Meetings of the Parent Council

6.1 All meetings of the Parent Council are open to all members of the Parent Forum and to the public. However, the Parent Council, including the Headteacher, has the right to meet in private during discussion of any matter which the Parent Council considers should be dealt with on a confidential basis.

6.2 The Headteacher has both a right and duty to attend Parent Council meetings or to be represented at a Parent Council meeting.

6.3 The Parent Council will meet at least once every school term.

6.4 The Annual General Meeting of the Parent Council will be held annually.

6.4.1 The Annual General Meeting will be chaired by the outgoing Chair, or in their absence the outgoing Vice-Chair, Secretary or Treasurer, in that order, up until the point in the meeting when new officers are appointed (or the outgoing office bearers are reappointed). In the event that no officers are available, it will be chaired by a representative of East Renfrewshire Council. The newly-elected or reappointed Chair should lead the remainder of the meeting.

6.5 Notice of all meetings should be made at least two weeks in advance of the meeting to all members and to the Parent Forum. Only in exceptional circumstances as decided by the Chair or other officer acting in that capacity, such as when an unexpected, urgent and essential decision is required, this notice period may be reduced or waived. In this case, the Chair should give written notice to the Parent Forum as soon as practical after the decision to hold the meeting is taken, giving the reasons for the urgency.

6.6 The Secretary, or another Parent Council member by mutual agreement, will take written minutes of every meeting, including the Annual General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meeting. The minutes will be circulated to the Parent Forum as soon as practical after the meeting and will be made available on the school website and/or other current media used for communication with the Parent Forum. Minutes will be stored securely as a permanent record.

6.7 The minimum number of members required in attendance at a meeting of the Parent Council to enable the business of the meeting to be conducted is one quarter of the self-nominating members of the Parent Forum.

6.8 Any decisions will be taken by a simple majority of those present who are entitled to vote. Consensus will be sought in the first instance, with the Chair asking for any objections to the proposed decision. In cases where there is not consensus, a formal vote will be held.

6.8.1 All parent members of the Parent Council are entitled to vote; neither co-opted members, representatives of special interest groups nor the Headteacher are entitled to vote.

6.8.2 In the event of a tied result, the Chair will have the casting vote, or, in their absence, the officer acting in that capacity in descending order of seniority as listed in 4.1. If none of these officers is present, and the vote is a tie, the decision should be postponed until the next meeting, when the vote should be re-run.

6.8.3 One member of the Parent Council, if seconded by another member, may call for a vote on any issue of substance.

7. Finance

7.1 The Parent Council (or any standing committee) may raise funds by any legal means, other than borrowing, and may expend these funds to carry out its functions at its discretion and in line with relevant legislation. Any funds raised by the Parent Council (or any standing committee) will be co-ordinated by an office bearer of the Parent Council (Treasurer) and held in the name of the Parent Council in a bank, building society or other account and withdrawals made or cheques authorised by two members, one of whom should be the Treasurer.

7.2 The Parent Council will be updated by the Treasurer (in person or via written report) of the current bank balance and proposed forward expenditure at each Parent Council meeting.

7.3 The Parent Council may receive gifts which must be recorded in the minutes of the next Parent Council meeting after the gift is made. This record must include the monetary value of the gift in Pounds Sterling. The Parent Council should decline gifts which it considers could create a conflict of interest or present a reputational or other risk to, or place an obligation on, the Parent Council or the School.

7.4 Where the Parent Council (or any standing committee) has or receives funds, a Treasurer must be elected and they will ensure that proper accounts are kept.

7.5 Where the Parent Council (or any standing committee) has any funds, a statement of accounts shall be presented to the Annual General Meeting and circulated to the Parent Forum. When the annual accounts have been approved by an independent examiner agreed by the Parent Council (who must not be a Parent Council member, or relative or partner of a Parent Council member) these will be published on the school website within three months for review by the Parent Forum.

7.6 Should any of the Parent Council standing committees cease to exist, any funds held by such committee, will be transferred to the Parent Council.

7.7 Should the Parent Council cease to exist, any funds held by it or any standing committee will be passed to the local education authority to be used for the benefit of the school.

8. Reviewing the constitution

8.1 The Parent Council may review and amend its constitution as required. 8.2 Consent of the Parent Forum for any amendments will be obtained in accordance with the Act (as in force at the relevant time).

8.3 In the event of a constitution review the Parent Council will follow the procedure outlined below:

- The Parent Forum will be notified via the meeting agenda that a review has been undertaken
- The Parent Forum will be able to request prior to the meeting a “track changes” version of the constitution
- The “track changes” version of the constitution will be circulated to all Parent Council members in advance of the meeting
- The constitution review will be discussed by members and any observers at the meeting
- A decision will be made on the change as per the process outlined in condition 6.8
- The revised constitution will be made available to the Parent Forum after the meeting via the school website
- The Parent Forum have 20 school working days from publication on the school website to raise any questions on the revised constitution
- In the event of any questions not being resolved to the satisfaction of the Parent Forum the changes shall not be implemented and an EGM shall be called to reach resolution
- In the event that no questions are raised within 20 school working days, the revised constitution shall be deemed to have been accepted by the Parent Forum and will come into force.